
A Basis for Discussion:

Letter to Editor of the New York Call, signed by David P. Berenberg et al., March 23, 1919

Letter to the *New York Call*, vol. 12, no. 82 (March 23, 1919), pg.

Editor of *The Call*:

The members of the American Socialist Party are face to face with a national and international crisis. We, who sign this letter, believe that the time has come for the party to restate its principles and reformulate its tactics. As a basis for discussion for the purpose of bringing about this result, we present the following suggestions:

1. We believe in a uniform declaration of principles in all party platforms, both local and national, and the abolition of all social reform planks now contained in them.

2. We believe that the party must teach, propagate, and agitate exclusively for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of an industrial democracy.

3. A political party cannot organize the workers on the economic field; but we believe that the party should assist this process of organization by a propaganda for revolutionary unionism as part of its general activities.

4. We believe that the Socialist candidates elected to office should adhere strictly to the above principles under penalty of recall.

5. We believe that the official party press, the educational institutions, and all other agencies of the party should be under direct party control.

6. We believe that the party should publish new literature in keeping with the policies and tactics above mentioned.

7. We believe that the National Executive Committee should immediately call a special national convention for the purpose of formulating party policies and tactics to meet the present crisis.

8. We believe that the Socialist Party should elect delegates to participate in any international congress to be attended by representatives of revolutionary Socialist parties of all countries, but that the party should refuse to participate in any conference called by “moderate Socialists” and “social patriots.”

9. We believe in the immediate discussion of suggestions such as these in every branch and local, and trust that such discussion will put a stop to organized separatism and division, to which we are unalterably opposed.

Yours fraternally,

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